

## Electrical code issues and answers.

### ● Public hearings on proposed WAC rule revisions

Public hearings are tentatively scheduled for mid to late October to receive public comment on proposed WAC rule revisions. The exact dates and locations will be posted on our Internet home page at [www.wa.gov/lni/electrical](http://www.wa.gov/lni/electrical). If you want to be notified automatically by e-mail see the following article about e-mail notification.

The proposed versions of WAC 296-46 and 401A have been renamed, restructured, and have revisions containing: telecommunications implementation language, technical changes, and policies turned into rule. The on-line versions of the new law and proposed rule revisions will be available soon on the electrical web site. You will be able to review the proposed rule changes on-line.

### ● Automatic e-mail notification of rules, policies, and other information effecting our customers

The electrical program has a one-way newsgroup (***Electrical News Announcements***) that allows all electrical stakeholders to receive automatic e-mail notification of meetings and other electrical news.

Electrical News Announcements has over 400 subscribers. We would like more subscribers to use this resource to get information quicker and more efficiently. Electrical News Announcements is a very powerful communication tool. We welcome suggestions on information you would like to receive using this technology.

How do you become a subscriber?

New users should go to <http://listserv.wa.gov/archives/electrical.html> and click on “**join or leave the list (or change settings)**”, then fill in your e-mail address and name. The subscription procedure recently changed when the list server was upgraded. If you subscribed previously and have not received any messages, please go to this web-site and either modify your information or subscribe again.

### ● Ever thought of becoming an electrical inspector?

Because of today's economic boom, coupled with the retirement of seasoned State Electrical Inspectors, the demand has never been greater for qualified applicants for the position of State Electrical Inspector. The time is now to make that move toward a rewarding job ensuring safe electrical installations in the state. For more information call your local Labor and Industries office or visit our web site at <http://www.wa.gov/lni/ohr/lnijobs.htm#safety>.

### ● Requesting an inspection

There are four ways to request an electrical inspection: Telephone, fax, in person, and using the Electrical Inspection Request Service (EIRS). The department receives about 700 inspection requests each day. You must provide sufficient information so that we can assign your request for inspection to the proper inspector.

When requesting an electrical inspection it is **very important** to give the permit number, purchaser's name, site address, what the inspection is for, and a contact telephone number and name. Without the permit number inspections may be delayed or not entered at all.

A new Internet inspection request system, Electrical Inspection Request Service (EIRS), is now available for contractors 24-hours a day. You may download the application allowing you to utilize EIRS at <http://www.wa.gov/lni/electrical/>. At this time, EIRS is limited to electrical and construction contractors.

### ● Fixtures mounted over junction boxes

The National Electrical Code (NEC), Article 410-14 (b), states that *“Electrical-discharge lighting fixtures surface mounted over concealed outlet, pull, or junction boxes shall be installed with suitable openings in back of the fixture to provide access to the boxes.”*

When surface mounted electrical-discharge lighting fixtures are mounted over boxes, sufficient access to the box must be provided to allow re-pulling, replacement, or disconnection of wires in the box. This applies where:

- 1) A junction box is connected to a raceway system\*.
- 2) The conductors entering the fixture are tapped from conductors in the junction box.
- 3) The interior of the fixture is not listed for junction of fixture wires with branch circuit wires.

**NOTE \*** Access to the junction box is not necessary where a single nonmetallic (Type NM) cable feeds unspliced or untapped through a box and is secured to the fixture body with an approved fitting or clamp.

Where an opening is required in the back of a fixture mounted over a junction box, attention should be given to the following:

- 1) Conductors must be protected from abrasion as provided in NEC 410-28 (b). Sharp edges in the opening must be bushed with a suitable insulating material.
- 2) The opening must be of sufficient size to provide access to the junction box.

### ● Preventing Home Fires: Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs).

Problems in home wiring, like arcing and sparking, are associated with more than 40,000 home fires each year. These fires claim over 350 lives and injure 1,400 victims annually. Electrical fires caused by arcing cause more than \$620 million in property damage annually.

A new electrical safety device for homes, called an arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI), will provide enhanced protection from fires resulting from unsafe home wiring conditions. By the time a typical fuse or circuit breaker opens a circuit to defuse arcing conditions, a fire may already have begun.

Arc fault circuit interrupters will be required January 1, 2002 by the NEC 210-12 (b) for all circuits that supply 125 volt 15 and 20 amp receptacles in dwelling unit bedrooms.

The consumer Product Safety Commission has a home electrical safety audit checklist to help reduce fires. The checklist may be found at <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/513.pdf>. A home wiring hazards guide may be found at <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/518.pdf>.

### ● Code Question of the Month

The “Code Question of the Month” will be a regular continuing feature of the *ELECTRICAL CURRENTS*. Each month a new question will be asked focusing on the electrical code. The answer will appear in the next *ELECTRICAL CURRENTS* issue.

What is the minimum length that the conductors in a single gang light switch box must extend outside the box opening?

- A. 2 inches    B. 3 inches    C. 6 inches    D. 9 inches

**The answer** to this code question will be in the next *ELECTRICAL CURRENTS* issue.